

Message Text

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TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

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FOR: SECSTATE EA/PHL ONLY

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E.O. 11652: NA

SUBJ: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - JUNE 24-30

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL

A. THE WIDEMAN CASE: TWO VERSIONS -- TWO WIDELY VARYING INTERPRETATIONS OF LAST WEEK'S DISMISSAL OF CHARGES AGAINST WASHINGTON POST STRINGER BERNARD WIDEMAN WERE PUBLISHED THIS WEEK. BULLETIN TODAY COLUMNIST JESS BIGORNIA TOOK THE HIGH ROAD, DECLARING THE DECISION PROOF TO THE WORLD "THAT THE PRESIDENT'S WORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS HIS BOND." BIGORNIA NOTED THAT WIDEMAN COULD HAVE BEEN "HUSTLED UNCEREMONIOUSLY" OUT OF THE COUNTRY AS HAD OTHER REPORTERS, BUT INSTEAD "HE HAD HIS DAY IN COURT." ON THE OTHER HAND KERIMA POLOTAN TUVERA'S EVENING POST, IN AN EDITORIAL HEADED "LICENSE TO DISTORT?", SAYS THE ONLY REASON WIDEMAN GOT OFF WAS LACK OF EVIDENCE, BUT IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT HIS STORIES "ARE BLATANTLY SLANTED" AGAINST

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THE PHILIPPINES. THE EDIT COMPARES WIDEMAN TO THE JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT "WHO MAY HAVE HONESTLY MADE A MISTAKE" IN LINKING THE CHOLERA OUTBREAK IN JAPAN TO THE PHILIPPINES, AND CONCLUDES: "WIDEMAN AND HIS ILK ARE MORE SINISTER, FOR THEY KNOWINGLY SOW LINE AND DISCORD UNDER A SHINING WHITE MANTEL."

B. ERNESTO GRANADA, ISRAEL AND HUMAN RIGHTS --
TIMES JOURNAL COLUMNIST ERNESTO GRANADA ACCEPTED LOCK,
STOCK AND BARREL REPORTS REACHING HERE THAT THE SUNDAY
TIMES OF LONDON HAD DOCUMENTED ISRAELI TORTURE OF ARAB
PRISONERS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IN TWO SEPARATE
COMMENTARIES HE ASKS THE BASIC QUESTION: "WHAT WILL
U.S. PRESIDENT CARTER DO NOW WITH THIS GROSS VIOLATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS? FOR ISRAEL IS THE BIGGEST RECIPIENT
OF AMERICAN MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID." TO FURTHER
DRIVE HOME HIS POINT, HE ADDS THAT COUNTRIES LIKE
ISRAEL AND SOUTH KOREA, WHICH "IGNORE CARTER'S APPEALS"
TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS, ARE REWARDED WITH INCREASED AID.

C. AMI, STAY HERE -- FRANCISCO DE LEON, WRITING
IN THE TIMES JOURNAL, RETURNED TWICE TO ONE OF HIS
FAVORITE THEMES THIS WEEK, VIX., THE IMPORTANCE OF A
CONTINUED U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION.
DE LEON IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECT OF TROOP WITH-
DRAWAL FROM SOUTH KOREA, BUT WAS SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY
PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS IN MAY TO THE NATO MEETING
IN BRUSSELS IN WHICH HE CALLED FOR "CREDIBLE" DETERRENTS.
THE COLUMNIST NOTED, "THIS IS HEARTENING TO ASIANS,
INCLUDING THE PHILIPPINES WHICH HAS BEEN THE U.S.'
STAUNCHEST ALLY IN THE REGION. FOR A CREDIBLE AMERICAN
PRESENCE CAN SERVE AS EFFECTIVE DETERRENT TO ANY
CAPRICIOUS WAR IN THE REGION." DE LEON HAS JUST
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RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO SOUTH KOREA, WHERE HE REUNITED
WITH OTHER KOREAN WAR CORRESPONDENTS.

D. MILITARY BASES COMMENT -- IN A LEAD EDIT THE
DAILY EXPRESS RECITED THE LITANY OF BASES ISSUES MAKING
CURRENT HEADLINES -- DOG BXQT, SERVICEMEN DEPARTING
WHILE THEIR CASES ARE PENDING IN PHILIPPINE COURTS, ETC.
-- AND REMARKED THAT THESE INCIDENTS "DO NOT SPEAK WELL
OF THE CLOSE RP-US RELATIONS AND COOPERATION NOW BEING
STRENGTHENED BY THE TWO COUNTRIES." THE EDITORIAL CALLS
ON PHILIPPINE AUTHORITIES TO "REGISTER OUR DISGUST AND
DISAGREEMENT" WHILE AT THE SAME TIME TO ATTEMPT TO
REVISE THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATIES WHICH ALLOW SUCH
"IRRITANTS."

E. NOT FUNNY -- DOROY VALENCIA AWOKE THE OTHER DAY
AND READ WHAT MOST OF US THOUGHT WAS AN AMUSING ACCOUNT
BY A RESPECTED RETIRED NEWSMAN ON HOW HE OBTAINED A VISA AT
THE U.S. CONSULATE. INSTEAD OF CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF
AND REPAIRING TO THE JEEPNEY COFFEE SHOP AT THE
INTERCON HOTEL FOR HIS DAILY CONFAB WITH HIS CRONIES,
DOROY PUT PAPER IN TYPEWRITER AND PROCEEDED TO VICIOUSLY

ATTACK THE "NASTINESS" OF AMERICAN CONSULS AND THEIR
TENTACLES." THEY ARE INDEED A "SPECIAL BREED OF
AMERICANS WHOSE DUTY IS TO PROTECT AMERICA FROM
"INTRUDERS" WHO WANT TO LIVE IN "PARADISE."

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II. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

VOLSPKR SPECTOR BRAVES ANTAGONISTIC CROWD AT UP --
THE JUNE 27 PROGRAM OF VOLUNTEER SPEAKER DR. RONALD
SPECTOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES PROVES THAT,
ALTHOUGH PROGRAMMING ON THE UP CAMPUS IS NOW POSSIBLE,
HAZARDS STILL EXIST. WHAT WE EXPECTED WOULD BE A
RELATIVELY SMALL SPECIAL INTEREST AUDIENCE OF FACULTY
AND GRADUATE STUDENTS TURNED OUT TO BE A LARGE GROUP
OF UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDENTS AND FACULTY.
SPECTOR'S EXCELLENT LECTURE ON THE BACKGROUND TO
AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN THE PHILIPPINES IN 1898 WAS
FOLLOWED BY A CONFRONTATIONAL, MARXIST/LENINIST-
ORIENTED, OCCASIONALLY INSULTING OPEN FORUM. HIS
AUDIENCE LARGELY IGNORED THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS TALK AND
TRIED TO FORCE THE DISCUSSION TOWARDS TOPICS LIKE "CON-
TEMPORARY AMERICAN IMPERIALISM" (PARTICULARLY THE
PRESENCE OF AMERICAN BASES ON PHILIPPINE SOIL) AND
LENIN'S DEFINITION OF IMPERIALISM, WHICH APPEARED TO
BE GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY THOSE PRESENT. NEITHER STUDENT
NOR FACULTY KNOWLEDGE OF EITHER IMPERIALISM OR
LENINISM SEEMED TO EXTEND BEYOND MASTERY OF THE KEY
CLICHES AND THE INTELLECTUAL CONTENT OF THE QUESTIONS
WAS DISAPPOINTINGLY LOW. STILL, THE EMOTIONAL COMMIT-
MENT WAS APPARENT FROM THE FERVOR OF SOME OF THE
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QUESTIONERS AND FROM THE FERVOR OF SOME OF THE QUESTIONERS AND FROM THE APPLAUSE THAT BROKE OUT FROM TIME TO TIME. SPECTOR, A VETERAN OF THE VIETNAM DEBATES ON AMERICAN CAMPUSES, WAS UNRUFFLED. HE RESPONDED EVENLY AND, IN THE POST'S VIEW, PERSUASIVELY.

SPECTOR'S EXPERIENCE CONFIRMS THE POST'S JUDGMENT THAT LARGE, MIXED STUDENT/FACULTY GATHERINGS OF THIS TYPE AT UP ARE NOT CONDUCTIVE TO RATIONAL DISCUSSION, AND IT IS OUR INTENTION TO AVOID SUCH FORA IN THE FUTURE IN FAVOR OF SMALLER GATHERINGS OF FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH A DIRECT INTEREST IN THE TOPIC AT HAND.

SPECTOR'S SECOND PROGRAM ON THE SAME SUBJECT WAS HELD ON JUNE 28 AT TJCC WITH A SMALL GROUP OF FACULTY FROM SEVERAL DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES. THIS SESSION PRODUCED A VERY LIVELY, CORDIAL GIVE-AND-TAKE. PHILLIPS

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